## IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims to read as follows:


1. (Currently Amended) A commerce management method for automatically managing agreements including at least one contingency, said method comprising:

a) logging at least one condition for ~~an~~ a particular agreement and identifying at least one potential response as indicating satisfaction of said at least one condition and at least one milestone for each said potential response and predetermining independent sources for each condition from whom the response received will be treated as a valid response for the condition;

b) retrieving information related to responses to each condition from predetermined independent sources when the milestone corresponding to a response is reached;

c) checking said retrieved information to determine whether said particular agreement is determinate; and

d) notifying contracting parties when said particular agreement is determined to be determinate.


2-3. (Canceled)


4. (Currently Amended). A computer program product as in claim 16, wherein said retrieved information includes at least one of: consumer's price index (CPI), prime lending rate (Prime), a currency exchange rate, a bond interest rate, a raw material price, ~~a weather forecast,~~ auction results, election results, and ballot proposition results.


5-8. (Canceled)


9. (Previously Presented) A commerce management method as in claim 1, wherein the step (d) of notifying the parties, notifies parties that the contract has failed when a response to a condition indicates said condition cannot be satisfied.


10. (Previously Presented) A commerce management method as in claim 1, wherein said

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retrieved information includes a mortgage rate.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) An automated commerce management system comprising:
a plurality of remotely connected terminals, contracting parties entering information about
contract conditions in said terminals and predetermining independent sources for
each condition from whom the response received will be treated as a valid response
for the condition;
a storage maintaining a contingency agreement database, said contingency agreement
database including contracting party information and condition information on each
of a plurality of agreements, said condition information including:
at least one potential response satisfying each condition, and at least one milestone
for each said potential response; and
an automatic data retriever retrieving condition response information from predetermined
independent sources via at least one remotely connected computer when the
milestone corresponding to a response is reached.

13. (Previously Presented) A commerce management system as in claim 12, further
comprising:
an automatic mailer notifying contracting parties a corresponding agreement has failed when
a response to a condition indicates said condition cannot be satisfied.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously Presented) A commerce management system as in claim 12 wherein said
retrieved information includes a mortgage rate.

16. (Previously Presented) A computer program product for automated commerce
management, said computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having
computer readable program code thereon, said computer readable program code comprising:
computer readable program code means for logging conditions for each of a plurality of
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agreements and for each logged condition identifying at least one potential response as indicating satisfaction and at least one milestone for each said potential response, and predetermining independent sources for each condition from whom the response received will be treated as a valid response for the condition;

computer readable program code means for retrieving information related to responses to each condition from predetermined independent sources when the milestone corresponding to a response is reached;

computer readable program code means for checking said retrieved information to determine whether said agreement is determinate; and

computer readable program code means for notifying contracting parties when said agreements is determinate.

17-20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) A commerce management method as in claim 1, wherein said retrieved information includes at least one of: consumer's price index (CPI), prime lending rate (Prime), a currency exchange rate, a bond interest rate, a raw material price, a weather forecast, auction results, election results, and ballot proposition results.

22. (Currently Amended) A commerce management system as in claim 12, wherein said condition response information includes at least one of: consumer's price index (CPI), prime lending rate (Prime), a currency exchange rate, a bond interest rate, a raw material price, a weather forecast, auction results, election results, and ballot proposition results.